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PROCEEDINGS
OF
THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.

[ISSUED NOVEMBER 10TH, 1866.]

SESSION 1865-66.

Thirteenth Meeting, 11th June, 1866.

SIR RODERICK I. MURCHISON, BART., K.C.B., PRESIDENT,
in the Chair.

PRESENTATION.—*R. R. Glover, Esq.*

ELECTIONS.—*Bruce Brine, Esq., Lieut. R.E.; Augustus F. Gore, Esq.; Charles G. Heathcote, Esq.; James Kitson, Esq., Jun.; Richard Levinge Swift, Esq.; Charles C. Plowden, Esq.; Major Robert Stuart; Thomas Wilkinson, Esq.*

ACCESSIONS TO THE LIBRARY SINCE MAY 14th, 1866.—‘The Albert Nyanza: Great Basin of the Nile, and Explorations of the Nile Sources,’ by S. W. Baker, Esq., M.A., &c. ‘Report on the Tinnevely Pearl Fisheries,’ by C. R. Markham, Esq., Sec. R.G.S., &c. ‘Le Livre de Marco Polo,’ par M. Pauthier. ‘The Geography of New South Wales,’ by W. Wilkins. ‘The principal Ruins of Asia Minor described and illustrated,’ by C. Texier and R. P. Pullan. ‘On the Jostedal-Bræ Glaciers in Norway, with some General Remarks,’ by C. M. Doughty, Esq. ‘Reisen durch Chile und die Westlichen Provinzen Argentiniens,’ von August Kahl. All presented by the authors. ‘Meteorology of India, an Analysis of the Physical Condition of India, Turkistan, the Himalaya, and Western Thibet,’ by Hermann de Schlagintweit Sakunlunski; presented by the India Office. Continuations of Journals, Periodicals, &c.

ACCESSIONS TO MAP-ROOM SINCE MAY 14th.—Atlas of India and High Asia, sketches by H. and R. von Schlagintweit; presented by the India Office. Admiralty Chart of the South Pole, showing icebergs. Sketches of the Pulni Mountains and Shevaroy Hills in

the Madras Presidency, on 24 sheets, presented by the Indian Office ; by Major D. Hamilton. Map of Les Monts Maudits in the Pyrenees.

The PRESIDENT said he had much gratification in announcing that the Council had this day elected his Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh an Honorary Fellow of the Society. His Royal Highness had been himself a traveller in distant regions, and was well qualified to appreciate the labours of the Society. The members would learn with great satisfaction that he had expressed his sincere pleasure in becoming one of them.

The following Papers were read :—

1. *On the Effect of the Destruction of Forests, in the Western Ghauts of India, on the Water Supply.* By C. R. MARKHAM, Esq., F.R.G.S.

THIS paper contained the results of observations made by the author during a recent visit to the chinchona plantations on the Neelgherries and other mountains of Southern India. These mountain districts contain the sources of a water-supply on which the prosperity—indeed, the very existence—of millions depends. The most northern part of the range is comprised in the two Mysore districts of Nuggur and Munjerabad, and it is continued through Coorg, Wynaad, and the Neilgherries to the remarkable gap at Palghat, which enables the railroad to pass from sea to sea, and beyond the gap comprises the Anamallay, Pulney, and Travancore hills. The rainfall along this range is derived almost exclusively from the South-west Monsoon between May and September, but the amount decreases as Cape Comorin is approached. Near Bombay it is 248 inches, while at the capital of Travancore it is 65, and at the Cape only 30 inches. The clouds heavily charged with moisture from the Indian Ocean part with it on first entering the colder stratum caused by the mountains, the rainfall sensibly diminishing eastward across the plateaux, and being curiously affected by the smallest variations of aspect and shelter. Within the last 20 years a great change has come over these forest-clad mountain districts, in the establishment of many English planters, who have brought great material blessings to the natives, but, in the extensive clearings of trees which they have necessarily made, have brought about a deterioration of the climate. In all, a total area of 180,000 acres of forest has been cleared for coffee, tea, and chinchona plantations. One effect of this has been the occurrence of sudden floods, which have increased yearly in volume and destructiveness. There is a system of forest conservancy in the Madras Presidency, and the present superintendent, Dr. Clegghorn, is a zealous and able man, but Mr. Markham did not advocate Government interference with the development of plantations ; he looked for help rather to the formation of reservoirs